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Couchey et al.

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(54) **CORE WITH CUSHION STRIP**

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B65H 19/28 (2006.01)
B65H 75/10 (2006.01)
B65H 18/28 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***B65H 75/28*** (2013.01); ***B65H 18/28*** (2013.01); ***B65H 19/28*** (2013.01); ***B65H 75/10*** (2013.01); *B65H 19/283* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC B65H 75/28; B65H 75/10; B65H 75/00; B65H 75/025; B65H 75/08; B65H 75/26; B65H 19/28; B65H 19/283; B65H 19/286; B65H 65/005; F16H 18/28
USPC 242/613, 613.1, 610, 610.4, 610.6
See application file for complete search history.

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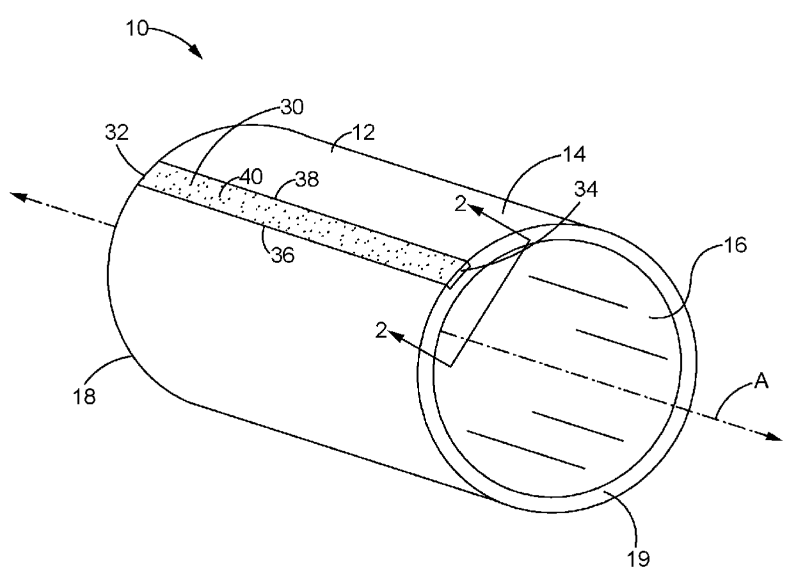
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A core for winding sheet material is proved. The core comprises a cylindrical tube having a longitudinally oriented slot formed therein, and a strip of soft material located in the slot. Because of the geometry of the slot and the strip, the strip may be softer in the central region but firmer where the core transitions from the relatively soft strip to the relatively hard tube. The leading edge of the sheet material imbeds itself into the soft central region of the strip as additional layers are wound around the core.

4 Claims, 8 Drawing Sheets



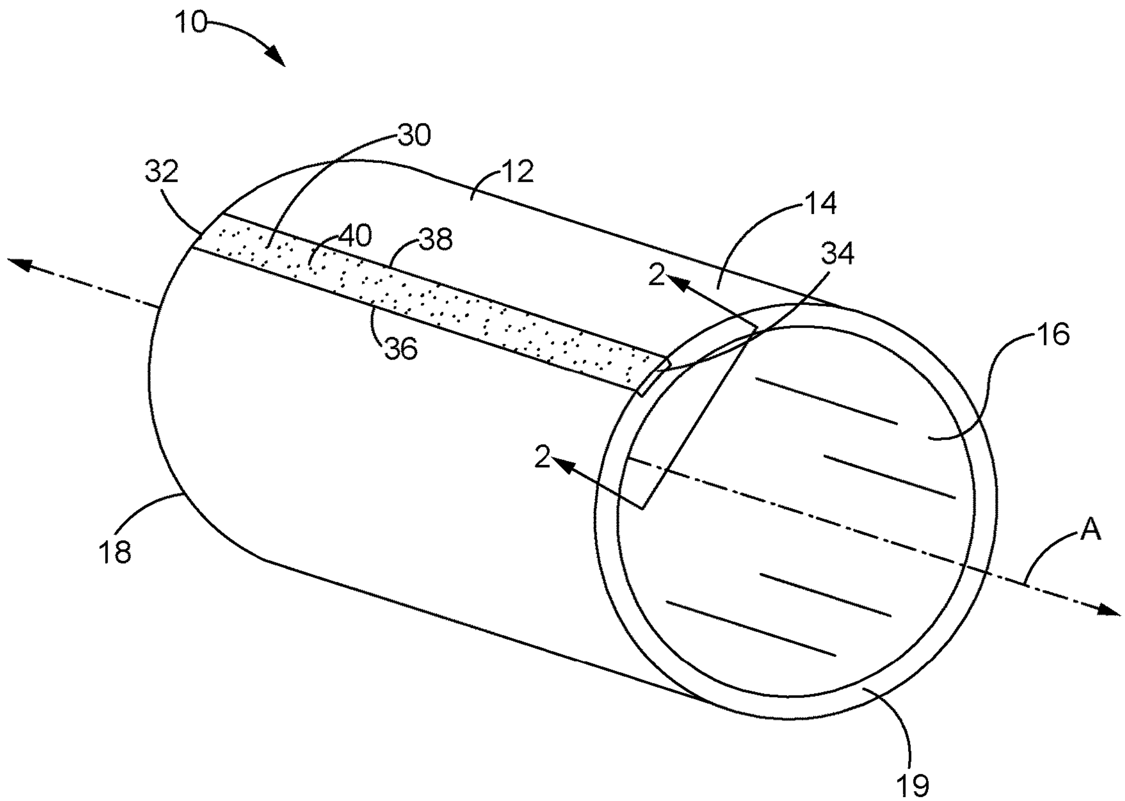


FIG. 1

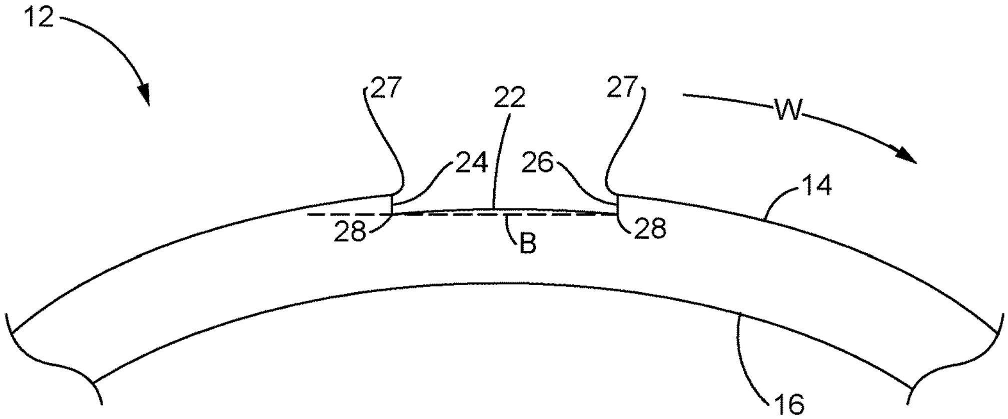


FIG. 2

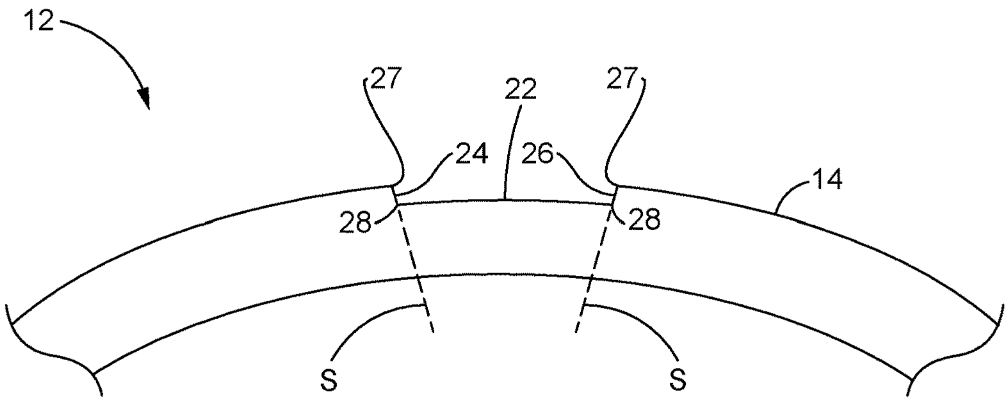


FIG. 3

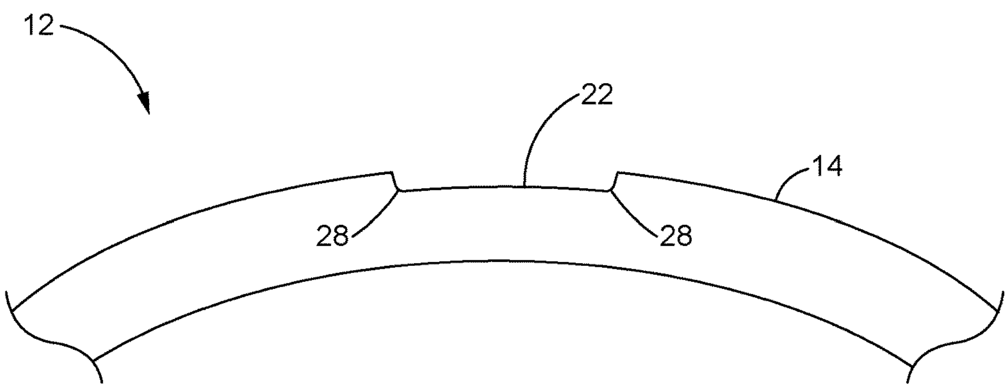


FIG. 4

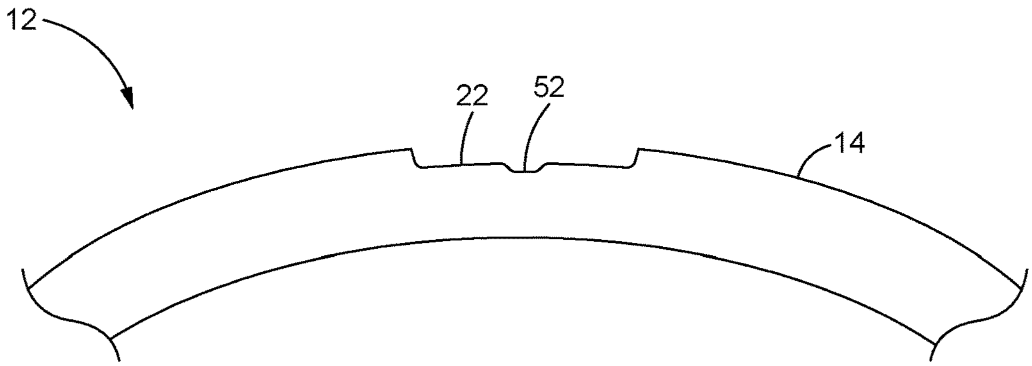


FIG. 5

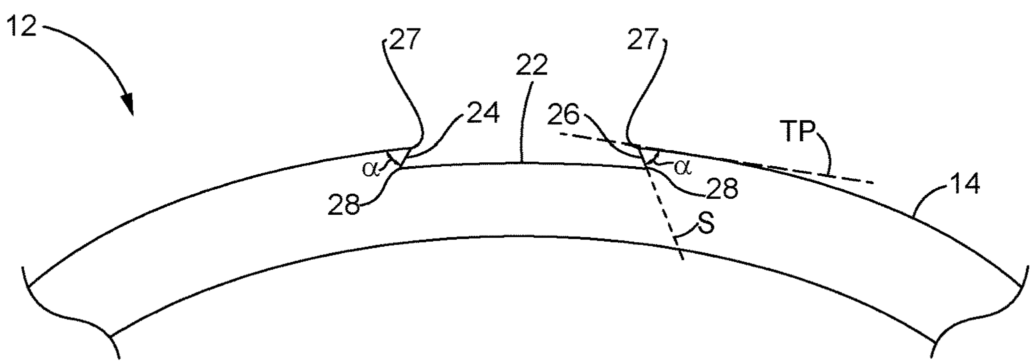


FIG. 6

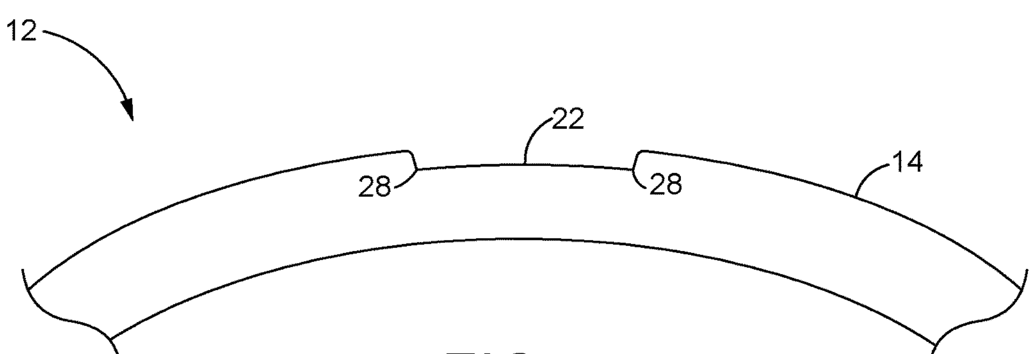


FIG. 7

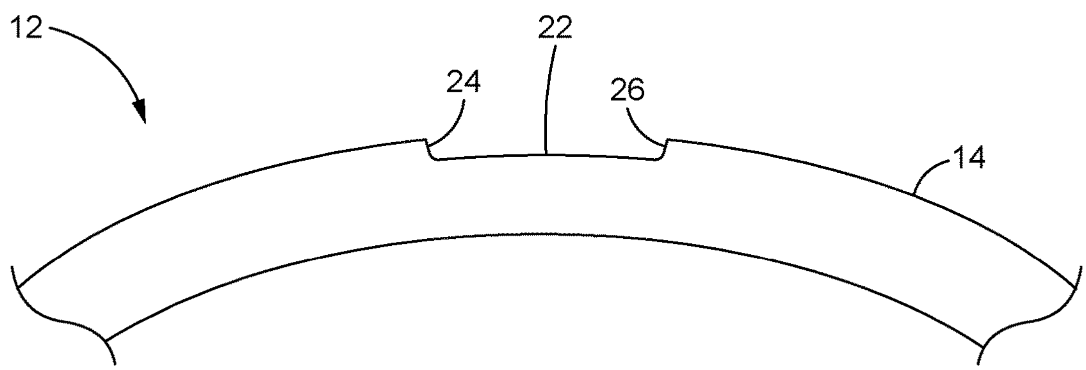


FIG. 8

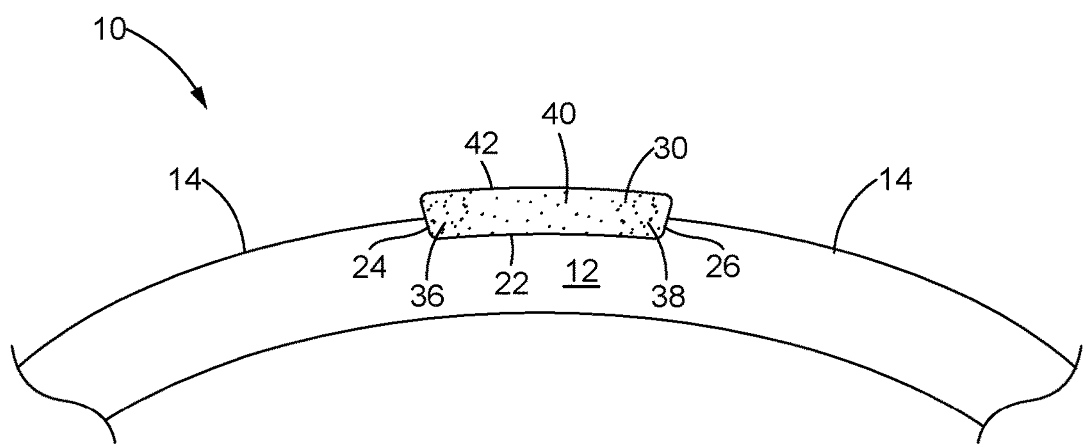
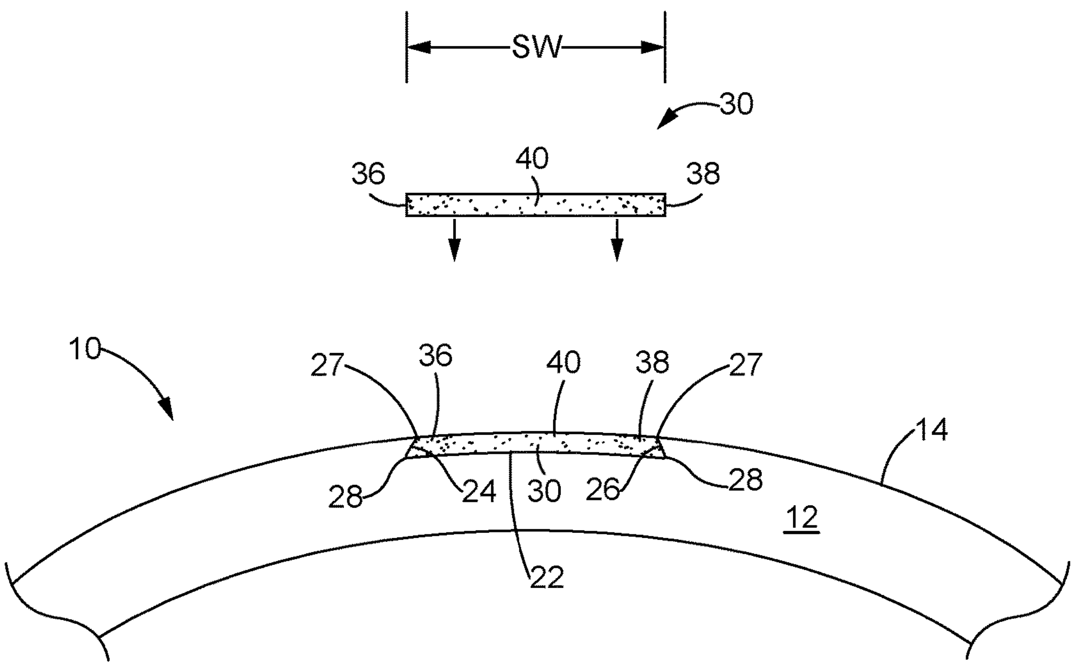


FIG. 9


SW
30
36
40
38
10
27
36
40
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27
14
28
24
30
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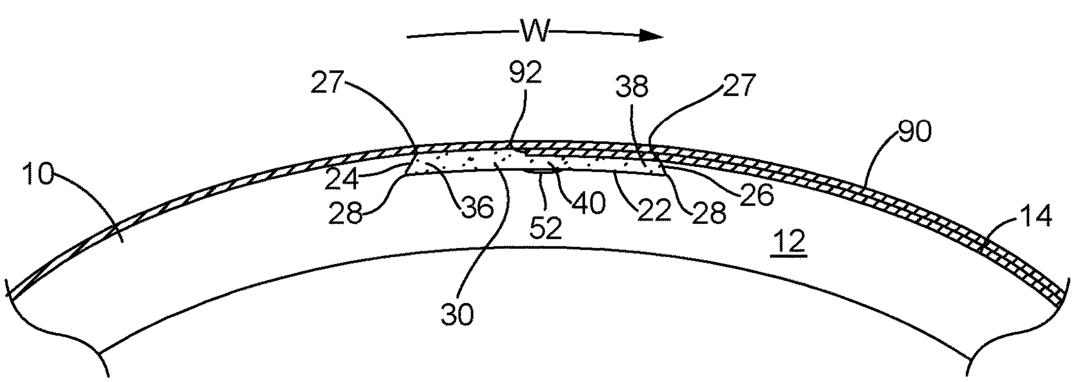
12
22

FIG. 10


W
27
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38
27
90
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24
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36
40
22
28
26
14
52
12
30

FIG. 11

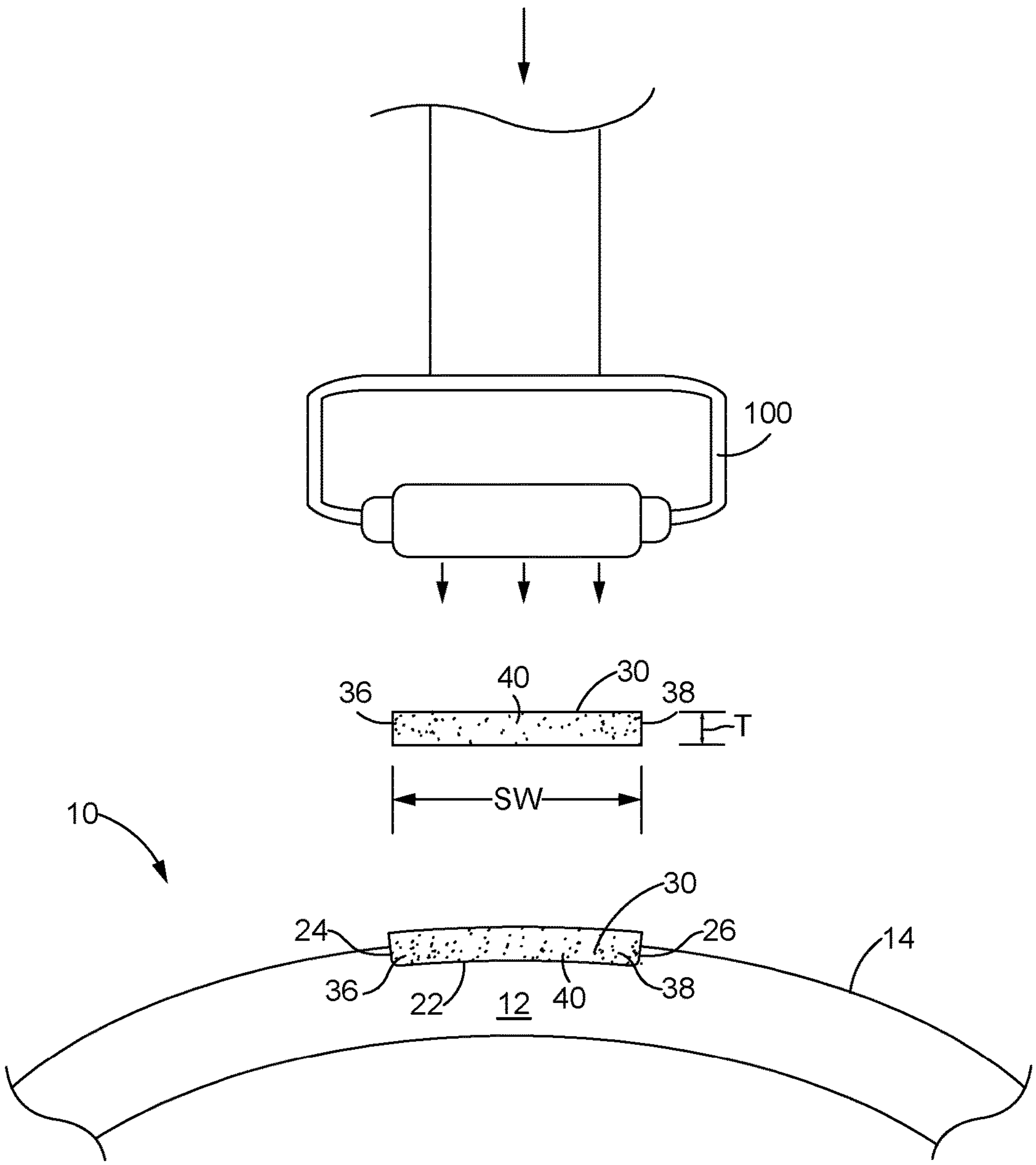

FIG. 12

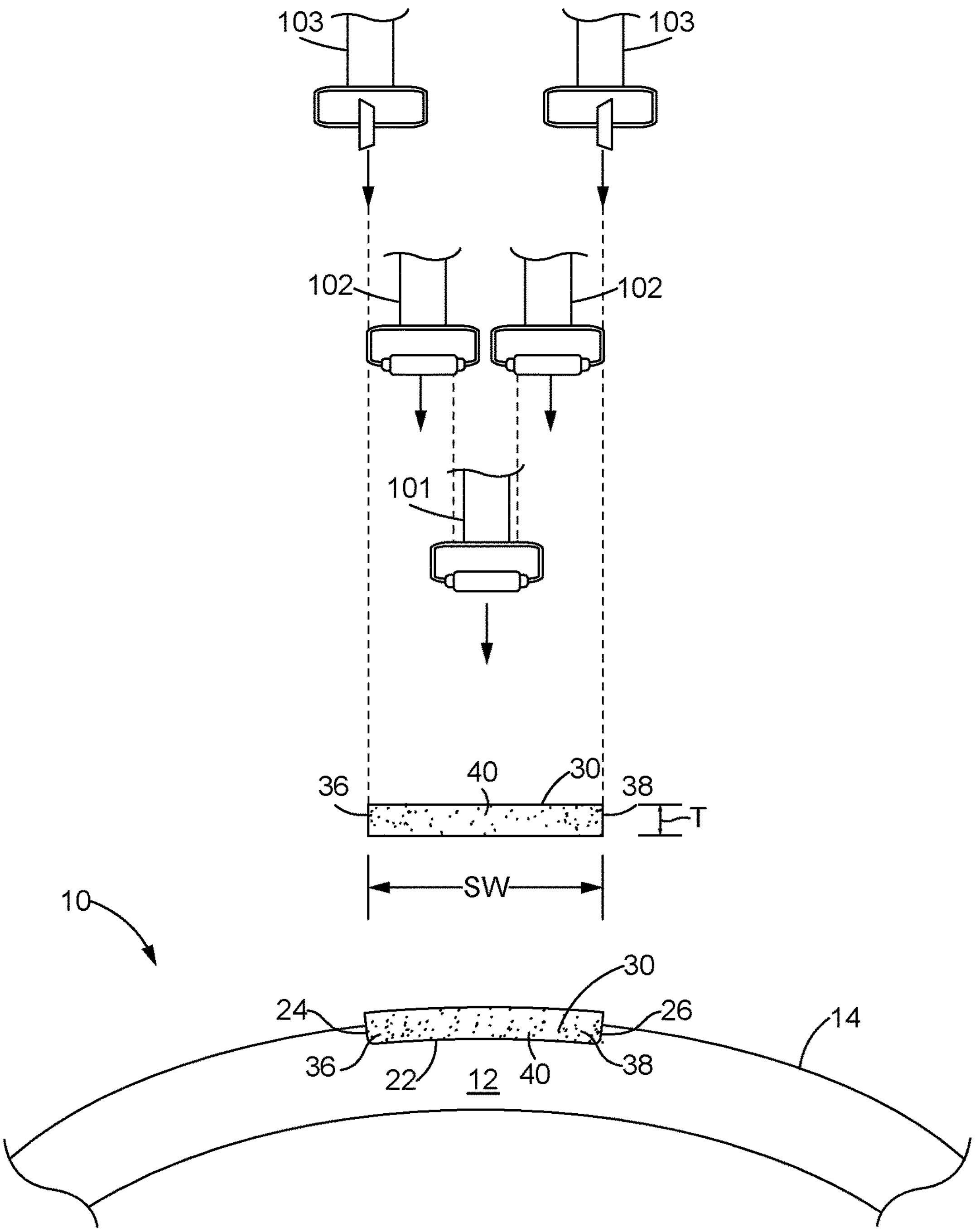

FIG. 13

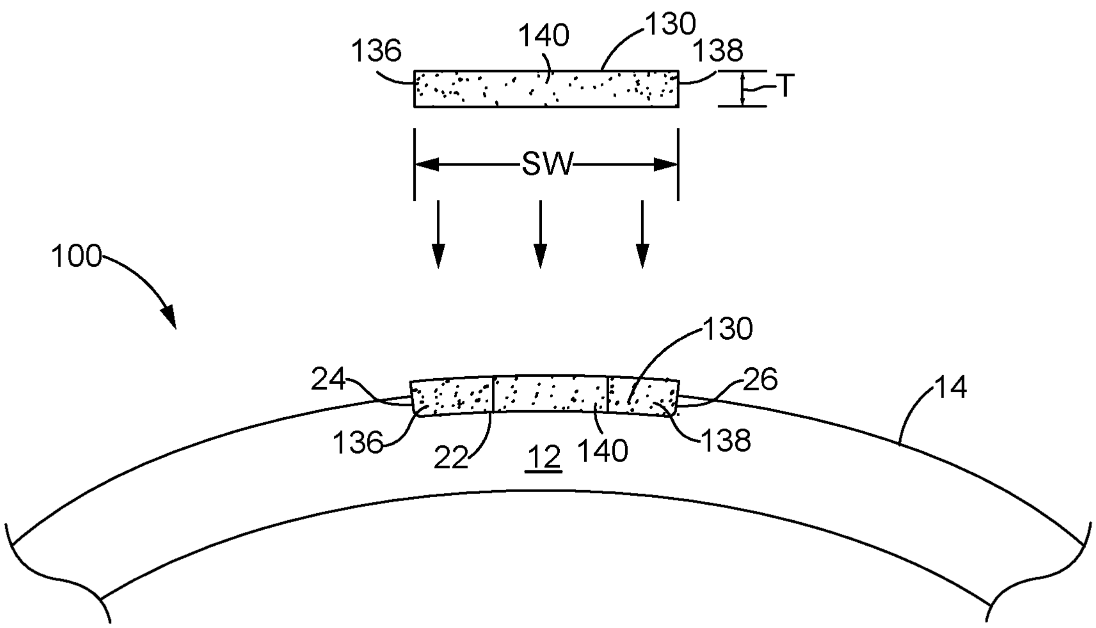

FIG. 14

CORE WITH CUSHION STRIP

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This disclosure relates to a core for winding sheet material thereon. More particularly, this disclosure relates to a core having a soft region in which the leading edge of a sheet can imbed itself as additional layers are wound around the core.

Description of the Related Art

Cores are used to wind sheet or strand material. However, many cores do not provide a starting area for the sheet material to compensate for the thickness of the sheet material. Upon winding a first layer of sheet material around the core, the next layers are wound over the leading edge, which can result in a line or mark on the sheet where it overlaps the leading edge.

The present disclosure is designed to solve the problems described above.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present disclosure generally relates to a core for winding sheet material thereon. The core is made from a tube having a longitudinally oriented slot for accommodating a strip of relatively soft material. Because of the geometry of the slot and the strip, the strip may be softer in the middle where cushioning is needed but firmer where the core transitions from the relatively soft strip to the relatively hard tube.

In one aspect the disclosure relates to a core comprising a hollow cylindrical tube and a strip. The tube has a length, an outer facing surface, an inner facing surface and a central longitudinal axis. The tube defines a slot having a bottom wall, a leading sidewall and a trailing sidewall. Each sidewall extends inwardly from a top edge located at the outer facing surface of the tube to a bottom edge. The strip is disposed within the slot. The strip has a longitudinal leading side edge and a longitudinal trailing side edge. The strip has a strip width and a strip thickness. The strip has a longitudinally oriented central region extending the length of the strip between the leading side edge and the trailing side edge. Preferably the strip is softer at the central region than at the leading and trailing side edges.

In another aspect a method of making a core is provided. The method may comprise the steps of: providing a cylindrical hollow tube having a length, the tube having an outer facing surface, an inner facing surface and a central longitudinal axis; forming a slot into the tube, the slot defined by a bottom wall, a leading sidewall and a trailing sidewall, each sidewall extending from a top edge at the outer facing surface of the tube to a bottom edge, the slot having a depth, an upper width and a lower width; providing a strip of cushioning material, the strip having a rectangular cross sectional shape, a thickness and a width, the thickness being at least as great as the depth of the slot, the width being at least as great as the upper width of the slot; and pushing the strip into the slot.

In another aspect a method of making a core is provided wherein the strip has a central region located between a leading side edge and a trailing side edge and the width (SW) of the strip exceeds the upper width of the slot. The method comprises the steps of first pushing the central region of the strip into the slot and adhering the central region to a center of the bottom wall, and then pushing the leading side edge and the trailing side edge of the strip into the slot, which compresses the leading side edge and the trailing side edge of the strip.

In still another aspect a core is provided comprising a cylindrical hollow tube and multiple strips. The tube defines a slot having a bottom wall, a leading sidewall and a trailing sidewall. The multiple strips are of different densities, and comprise a lower density strip located in at least the central region of the slot and a higher density strip located between the lower density strip and the trailing sidewall.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a core according to the disclosure, the core comprising a tube and a strip of soft material located in a slot defined by the tube.

FIG. **2** is a cross-sectional view of the tube of FIG. **1** taken along line **2-2**, showing a close up view of the slot in the core.

FIG. **3** is a cross-sectional view of a tube having an alternative slot.

FIG. **4** is a cross-sectional view of a tube having an alternative slot.

FIG. **5** is a cross-sectional view of a tube having an alternative slot.

FIG. **6** is a cross-sectional view of a tube having an alternative slot.

FIG. **7** is a cross-sectional view of a tube having an alternative slot.

FIG. **8** is a cross-sectional view of a tube having an alternative slot.

FIG. **9** is a cross-sectional view of a core.

FIG. **10** is a cross-sectional view of the tube of FIG. **6** and a cushion strip before and after the strip is installed into the slot.

FIG. **11** is a cross-sectional view of a core and the first two layers of a wound sheet.

FIG. **12** is a schematic showing a method of installing a strip into a slot.

FIG. **13** is a schematic showing an alternative way to make a core.

FIG. **14** is a schematic of an alternative core before and after multiple strips have been installed into the slot.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

While the invention described herein may be embodied in many forms, there is shown in the drawings and will herein be described in detail one or more embodiments with the understanding that this disclosure is to be considered an exemplification of the principles of the invention and is not intended to limit the disclosure to the illustrated embodiments. Aspects of the different embodiments can be combined with or substituted for one another.

As will be appreciated, terms such as "above" and "below", "upper" and "lower", "top" and "bottom," (etc.), used as nouns, adjectives or adverbs refer in this description to the orientation of the structure of the core as it is illustrated in the various views. Such terms are not intended to limit the invention to a particular orientation.

Turning to the drawings, where like numerals indicate like (but not necessarily identical) elements, FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a core **10** according to the disclosure. The core **10** is configured for winding sheet or strand material, and comprises a tube **12** and a strip **30** of material.

The tube **12** may be hollow and has a length, an inner diameter (ID), an outer diameter (OD) and a central longitudinal axis (A). The tube **12** has an outer facing surface **14** and an inner facing surface **16**. The tube **12** has a first annular end **18** and a second annular end **19**.

The tube **12** may be any suitable length, with 12 inches to 95 inches being a typical range. A typical OD may be 6.688 inches (radius of curvature=3.344 inches), and a typical ID may be 6.028 inches (radius of curvature=3.014 inches). A typical radial thickness (OD–ID) may be 0.330 inches.

The tube **12** defines a longitudinally oriented slot **20** (best shown in FIG. **2**) extending the length of the tube **12** substantially parallel to the axis A and configured to accommodate the strip **30**. The slot **20** may be any suitable depth, shape and width. Various exemplary slots are provided in the figures and described below.

All or most of the strip **30** may be disposed within the slot **20**. The strip **30** may be any suitable shape, including one having a rectangular cross-section.

The strip **30** has a first annular end **32** aligned with the first annular end **18** of the tube **12** and a second annular end **34** aligned with the second annular end **19** of the tube **12**. The strip **30** has a length substantially the same as the tube length. The strip **30** has a longitudinal leading side edge **36** and a longitudinal trailing side edge **38**. Referring to FIG. **10**, the strip **30** has a strip width (SW) which is the distance between the leading side edge **36** and the trailing side edge **38**. The strip **30** has a longitudinally oriented center region **40** extending the length of the strip **30** between the leading side edge **36** and the trailing side edge **38**.

Preferably the strip **30** is made of a soft resilient material, such as a foam or rubber material. As a result, the leading edge **92** of the wound sheet **90** can imbed itself the strip **30** when subsequent layers are wound. The subsequent layers apply inward pressure on the leading edge **92**, causing the leading edge **92** to sink into the strip **30**, which provides a smoother winding surface for subsequent layers and thus minimizes or eliminates the line or mark often found on these layers.

Preferably the installed strip **30** is softer along its center region **40** than near the leading and trailing side edges **36**, **38**. This is because, when a sheet **90** is wound around a tube **12** having a soft foam strip **30**, the transition from foam to hard plastic can create a line or mark on the sheet. Therefore it is desirable to have a more gradual transition from soft foam to hard plastic. This is accomplished by providing a strip **30** of soft material that is softer (for example, less dense) in the middle region **40** and less soft (for example, more dense) along the longitudinal edges **36**, **38** of the strip where it abuts the hard tube **12**. The various ways for accomplishing this difference in softness are described below.

FIG. **2** is a cross-sectional view of the core **10** of FIG. **1** taken along line **2-2**, showing a close up view of the slot **20** with the strip **30** removed for clarity. As noted above, the slot **20** runs the length of the tube **12**. The slot **20** is defined by a bottom wall **22**, a first sidewall **24** and a second sidewall **26**. In the figures it is assumed that the sheet material is wound around the core **10** clockwise, in the direction of arrow (W) in FIG. **2**. Thus, the first sidewall **24** of the clot **30** may be referred to as the "leading" sidewall **24** and the second sidewall **26** may be referred to as the "trailing" sidewall.

In FIG. **2** the bottom wall **22** is annular, that is, the bottom wall **22** defines the arc of a circle. In this example the outer facing surface **14** of the tube **12** and the bottom wall **22** are concentric.

Each sidewall **24**, **26** extends from a top edge **27** to a bottom edge **28**. In this example the sidewalls **24**, **26** are parallel to each other, with each sidewall **24**, **26** defining a plane perpendicular to a plane (B) intersecting the entire bottom edges **28**.

The following are sample dimensions of the tube **12** and slot **20**: The outer facing surface of the tube **12** has a radius of curvature of 3.344 inches and the outer facing surface of the tube **12** has a radius of curvature of 3.014 inches. The bottom wall **22** has a radius of curvature 3.288 inches. The depth of the slot **20** is a constant (3.344–3.288=0.056 inches, or 56/1000th inch). The width of the slot **20** is 0.750 inches and is constant along its length and its height.

The slot **20** of FIG. **3** is similar to the slot **20** of FIG. **2** except that the sidewalls **24**, **26** are not parallel but rather taper slightly inward toward each other in the radially inward direction. In this example, each of the slot sidewalls **24**, **26** defines a radially oriented plane (S), i.e., a plane that intersects the entire central longitudinal axis (A). As a result, the upper width of the slot **20** (width at the outer facing surface **14**) is greater than the lower width of the slot **20** (width at the bottom wall **26**). In other words, the slot **20** width decreases in the radial dimension from the outer facing surface **14** ("upper width") to the bottom wall **22** ("lower width"). As a result, for a strip **30** having a rectangular cross-section like the strip shown in FIG. **10**, the strip **30** will be slightly compressed near its side edges **36**, **38** when it is inserted into the slot **20**.

The slot **20** of FIG. **4** is similar to the slot **20** of FIG. **3** except that the bottom edges **28** are rounded. These edges **28** may have any suitable radius of curvature, such as 0.010 inches. The rounded bottom edges **28** further compress (densify) the strip **30** slightly along the side edges **36**, **38**. The bottom wall **22** is annular and may have a radius of curvature of 3.288 inches. The slot **20** may be 0.056 inches deep.

The slot **20** of FIG. **5** is similar to the slot **20** of FIG. **4** except the tube **12** defines a longitudinally oriented dip **52** located between the bottom edges **28**. In other words, the bottom wall **22** includes a centrally disposed dip **52**. The slot depth is constant everywhere except along the dip **52**. For example, the depth of the slot **20** may be 0.041 inches everywhere except along the dip **52**, where the depth may be about 0.071 inches. This dip **52** allows the strip **30** to depress further, rendering it softer in its central region **40**.

FIG. **6** is a cross-sectional view of a tube **12** having an alternative slot **20**. The bottom edges **28** of the slot **20** are rounded as in FIGS. **4** and **5**. However, the sidewalls **24**, **26** form a dovetail shape, that is, they splay away from each other in the radially inward direction. The upper width of the slot **20** (the distance between the top edges **27**) is smaller than the lower width (the distance between the bottom edges **28**). For example, the upper width may be 0.719 inches and the lower width may be 0.750 inches. The plane (S) of each sidewall **24**, **26** may form an acute included angle (a) with a plane (TP) tangential to the outer facing surface **14** of the tube **12** at the top edge **27**.

As a result of this dovetail shape, the strip **30** may be even more compressed at its side edges **36**, **38** when inserted into the slot **20** than in previous examples. This increased compression of the strip **30** results in a higher density of foam at the edges **36**, **38**, which helps the foam strip **30** resist inward pressure from the pre-load force exerted on it by a sheet **100**. This in turn provides a smoother transition from the soft foam strip **30** to the hard tube **12**.

FIG. **7** is a cross-sectional view of a tube **12** having an alternative slot **20**. The bottom edges **28** of the slot are rounded and the bottom wall is annular as in previous examples. However, the bottom wall **22** has a relatively much larger radius of curvature (for example, 12.738 inches versus 3.288 inches in FIG. **4**) than in previous examples, and thus appears almost flat in the figure. This near "flatness" causes the center region **40** of a foam strip **30** to be softer (weaker) than, in, say FIG. **4**, because the center region **40** of the strip **40** is not as compressed. The strip edges **34**, **36** will be preloaded (compressed) but there will be less preloading of the strip **30** in the central region **40** than in FIG. **4**.

The slot **20** of FIG. **8** is similar to the slot **20** of FIG. **4** except that the bottom wall **22** has a larger radius, for example, 3.294 inches versus 3.288 inches in FIG. **4**, while the outer facing surface **14** of the tube **12** has the same radius as in FIG. **4**. As a result, the slot **20** is shallower than in FIG. **4**. For example, the slot **20** of FIG. **8** may have a depth of 0.050 inches versus 0.056 inches in FIG. **4**. If used with the same thickness strip **30** as might be used in FIG. **4**, say, a strip **20** having a thickness (T) of 0.056 inches, this shallower depth will result in the strip **30** "sticking out" (extending above) the outer facing surface **14** of the tube **12**, similar to the core **10** shown in FIG. **9**.

FIG. **9** is a cross-sectional view of the tube **12** of FIG. **8** with a strip **30** having a thickness (T) exceeding the depth of the slot **20**. Since the slot **20** is shallower than the thickness of the strip **30**, the top surface **42** of the strip **30** extends above the outer facing surface **14** of the tube **12**.

A strip **30** having a thickness (T) greater than the depth of the slot **20** may be used use any slot **20** described herein. As a result, winding a sheet of material **90** over the core **10** will cause a greater pre-load (inward pressure) on the strip **30**.

In addition to being deeper (thicker) than the slot **20**, the installed strip **30** preferably is less dense along the middle region **40** than along the side edges **36**, **38**. This variation in density across the width (W) of the strip **30** may be the result of one or more factors explained herein and especially with respect to FIG. **11**, including the geometry of the slot **20** and that of the strip **30**.

FIG. **10** is a cross-sectional view of a core **10** and a strip **30** before and after the strip **30** is installed into the slot **20**. The slot **20** is similar to the slot **20** of FIG. **6** in that is has a dovetail cross-sectional shape. As noted above, the purpose of the dovetail shape is to increase the density of the foam strip **30** near its edges **34**, **36**, and thus provide firmer support near the edges **34**, **36** for the wound sheet **90**. The splaying of the slot's leading edge **24** and trailing edge **26** also may eliminate the need for applying adhesive to the edges **34**, **36** of the strip **30**. In the figure, the strip **30** has a width (SW) substantially the same as the lower width of the slot **20** but greater than the upper width of the slot **20**.

FIG. **11** is a close up cross-sectional view of a core **10** showing a sheet of material **90** wrapped around the tube **12**. The strip **30** comprises a less dense central region **40** interposed between more dense regions near the leading edge **36** and trailing edge **38**.

The leading edge **92** of the sheet **90** is overlies the less dense central region **40** of the strip **30**. As the sheet **90** is wound around the tube **12**, the sheet **90** exerts inward pressure on the underlying layer of sheet material **90**, including the leading edge **92**. In response, the leading edge **92** imbeds itself into the strip **30**, providing a smoother substrate for subsequent layers of the sheet **90**. This allows the sheet **90** to be wound smoothly around the core **10** without leaving lines or other imperfections on the wound sheet **90**.

Even where the strip **30** abuts the relatively harder tube **12** along the top edges **27** of the slot **20**, the relatively higher density of the foam strip **30** along these side edges **36**, **38** helps support the sheet **90**, mitigating or preventing damage to the sheet **90** along the longitudinal regions where the core **10** transitions between the soft strip **30** and the hard tube **12**.

This example illustrates a number of potentially advantageous features:

1. Dovetailed slot: The dovetailed sides **24**, **26** increase the density of the strip along its side edges **36**, **38** and thus helps support the sheet **90** along these side regions **34**, **36**. The dovetail shape may also eliminate the need to adhere the strip **30** to the bottom wall **22** along the side edges **36**, **38** as explained further below.
2. Depression in bottom wall: The centrally located dip **52** in the bottom wall **22** provides a lower durometer in this region which helps the leading edge **92** to sink into the strip **30**.
3. Strip width: Using a strip **30** that is wider than the upper width or even the lower width of the slot **20** helps densify the strip **30**, especially at the side edges **36**, **38**.
4. Strip thickness greater than slot depth: Having the slot depth less than the thickness of the foam strip **30** provides a "preload" compression on the strip **30** when the sheet is first wound.
5. Rounded bottom edges: The rounded bottom edges **28** may help densify the side regions **36**, **38** of the strip **30**.

Any or all of these features have the potential advantage of minimizing or eliminating the line or mark that sometimes appears on the first number of layers of a wound sheet **90**.

Method of Making a Core

FIG. **12** is a schematic showing one way to make a core **10**. The core **10** may be made according to the following steps:

Step 1: Provide a tube **12**. The tube **12** may be made of a hard material such as plastic.

Step 2: Mill a slot **20** into the tube **12**. The slot **20** may have any of the features described herein.

Step 3: Provide a strip **30** of cushioning material. The strip **30** may have a rectangular cross sectional shape and have a thickness (T) and a width (SW). The thickness (T) may be equal to or greater than the depth of the slot **20**. The width (SW) of the strip **30** may be equal to or greater than the upper width and/or lower width of the slot **20**. For example, the strip **20** may have a thickness (T) of, say, 0.065 inches while the slot has a depth of 0.056 inches and the strip **30** may have a width (SW) of 0.850 inches while the slot **20** has an upper width and a lower width of 0.750 inches.

Step 4: Using a roller **100**, push the strip **30** into the slot **20**. First, the roller **100** may push the center region **40** of the strip **20** into the slot **30**, where it may be adhered to the bottom wall **22** with glue or other adhesive that has been previously applied to the slot **30** or to the strip **20**, then the side edges **36**, **38** of the strip **30** may be pushed into place, in essence, "tucking" or squeezing the edges **36**, **38** of the strip **30** into the slot **20**.

This process leaves the foam cells near the center region **40** of the strip **30** less compressed, with less pressure applied to the center of the strip by the roller(s) **100**. The resulting strip **20** has a higher density near the edges **36**, **38** and a lower density along the center region **40**.

FIG. **13** is a schematic showing an alternative way to make a core **10**. In this alternative, a sequence of rollers **101**, **102** and **103** push the strip **30** into the slot **20**. A first sequential roller **101** pushes the center region **40** of the strip **20** into the slot **30**, where it may be adhered to the bottom wall **22** with glue or other means of adhesion, including but not limited to solvent bonding and heat/melting, that has been previously applied to the slot **30** or to the strip **20**. Then a pair of second sequential rollers **102**, lined up with the shoulders of the first roller **101**, push the portions of the strip **30** on either side of the central portion **40** into place. Finally, an optional third set of sequential "tucking" rollers **103**, lines up with the side edges **36**, **38** of the strip **30**, push or tuck in portions of the strip leading and trailing side edges **36**, **38** immediately adjacent the slot's leading and trailing edges **24**, **26**, where these portions may be adhered to the slot **20**.

FIG. **14** is a schematic of an alternative core **100** before and after multiple strips **130** have been installed into the slot **20**. In this embodiment, the strips **130** are multiple longitudinal strips of different densities, for example, a lower density strip **140** (say, 2 lbs./cu.in.) for installation into the center region of the slot **20** and higher density strips **136**, **138** (say, 4 lbs./cu.in.) for installation into the slot **20** adjacent the leading and trailing sidewalls **24**, **26**.

It is understood that the embodiments of the invention described above are only particular examples which serve to illustrate the principles of the invention. Modifications and alternative embodiments of the invention are contemplated which do not depart from the scope of the invention as defined by the foregoing teachings and appended claims. It is intended that the claims cover all such modifications and alternative embodiments that fall within their scope.

The invention claimed is:

1. A core for winding sheet material thereon, the sheet material having a leading edge, the core comprising:

a hard cylindrical hollow tube having a length, the tube having an outer facing surface, an inner facing surface and a central longitudinal axis (A), the tube having a first annular end and a second annular end, the tube defining a slot having a bottom wall, a hard leading sidewall and a hard trailing sidewall, each sidewall extending from a top edge at the outer facing surface of the tube to a bottom edge, the slot extending the length of the tube substantially parallel to the central longitudinal axis (A); and

a strip of relatively softer material disposed within the slot, the strip having a length substantially the same as the tube length, the strip having a longitudinal leading side edge and a longitudinal trailing side edge, the strip having a strip width (SW) and a strip thickness (T), the strip having a longitudinally oriented central region extending the length of the strip between the leading side edge and the trailing side edge; wherein

the sidewalls of the slot form a dovetail shape;

the slot has an upper width and a lower width greater than the upper width; and

prior to insertion into the slot, the strip has a rectangular cross sectional shape with the strip width (SW) greater than the upper width of the slot.

2. The core of claim **1** wherein:

the dovetail shape of the sidewalls increases the density of the strip along the leading side edge and the trailing side edge.

3. The core of claim **1** wherein:

the density of the strip along the leading side edge and the trailing side edge is greater than the density of the strip in the longitudinally oriented central region.

4. The core of claim **1** wherein: when the sheet material is wound around the core with the leading edge of the sheet material overlapping the strip, the leading edge becomes imbedded into the strip, thereby providing a smooth substrate for subsequent layers of the sheet material.

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